

CIA: Unobtrusive

Complex, Employees Blend Int

By Bill McAllister

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If you want to see the Central Intelligence Agency's headquarters, go to Pizza Supreme on Old Chain Bridge Road in McLean. Sketched on one wall there is a cartoonist's view of the agency's massive headquarters that are hidden two miles away in the Virginia woods.

There are some obvious flaws in the drawing: the cartoon building is too tall and is topped by the letters "CIA." But none of the restaurant's customers—many of them CIA employees—has ever complained to pizza shop owner Mike Mansy.

The drawing and the customers' silence are among the few reminders in Fairfax County of something the CIA would just as soon have everyone forget: both its headquarters and a good number of the CIA's estimated work force of 15,000 are nestled away among all the other backyard-barbecueing and lawn-tending suburbanites.

Aside from a half dozen highway signs directing traffic to the CIA complex and a noontime crowd that suddenly appears at a small delicatessen called the McLean Restaurant, there are few other outward (or "overt," as the CIA operatives would say) signs that the nation's spy center is located in the Langley countryside.

"There is nothing... The agency could be in Timbuc-too," said William Ladson, principal at McLean High School.

Fourteen years after the CIA deserted most of its downtown Washington offices for the suburbs, the agency has become an accepted, if not unquestioned, fact of life in Fairfax McLean countryside.

County officials seem only too happy to have what Douglas Harman, deputy county executive, sees as "an excellent employment

center" and "a very quiet neighbor." They readily dismiss any negative impact, such as having a large number of county residents who are disinterested in local affairs; as many CIA employees seem to be.

"If you wanted to... you could spend your whole life there—from womb to tomb," claimed former CIA employee Victor Marchetti.

Indeed, the agency provides its employees with a myriad of services right inside its compound. There's a knitting and crochet club, ("It doesn't do much for our 007 image," admits one official), a skeet shooting club called "The Sitting Ducks," and two softball leagues that include teams named "The Good Guys," "Ballbusters," and "Wild Things."

"We're probably the only spy organization in the world that has a chorus that sings Christmas carols to its workers," said another CIA officer. What's more the agency also has a prayer and Bible study group.

Such programs are part of the agency's traditional, avowed paternalism, but some former CIA employees said the programs also breed an insularity that they now find disturbing.

CIA employees are "never tuned into the local scene," grumbles former CIA employee Robert L. Weik, who this month finished last among six Republicans seeking nominations for five seats in the Virginia House of Delegates from the northern Fairfax District.

Weik, who had said he thought his CIA ties would help him in the primary, thinks otherwise now. His CIA colleagues, who he expected might support him, "are completely oriented to Uganda, not Reston," he grouches.

Although the unveiling of highway traffic signs pointing to the CIA complex created a small stir in 1973, the McLean city directory has

yet to add agency's presence to the town's their occup Gov't., which residents say is a situation they welcome.

Few court that worry spend any where they fax County fus Phillips, a district the agency and the CIA.

"It means ing," agrees ning Commi Edward C. works for the position he v

The CIA Fairfax "is from that (Army post) logical Surv ered in Re says.

Just how r this county c 557,500 have ties to the CIA isn't known. The agency doesn't release any employment figures and county officials can't recall if they ever asked.

A Falls Church lawyer, arguing for a zoning change in McLean, did ask about 10 years ago and "went through all kinds of shenanigans" before calling the Russian embassy. "I made out as a cab driver and got some figure," recalls Lytton H. Gibson, the lawyer.

Gibson was claiming that the area around the CIA was well developed and that a highrise apartment complex would be in order. Although he can't recall the figure given him by the Russians, county officials granted his client the zoning change. (News reports at the time said the Russian told him the current figure of 3,500 would eventually expand to 11,000.)

Today the CIA is, by all estimates, one of the biggest industries in Fairfax and one county officials concede they know little about. "Really, we have very little to do with them," says county executive Robert W. Wilson.

McAllister, Bill
CIA 2.06.2 (Employees eating place)
Activities

ORG1 Pizza Supreme
McLean Restaurant

CIA 1.04 Weik, Robert
Wigren, Lee H.

CIA 2.06.7
CIA 1.04 Phillips, David
STAT

ORG1 Imperial Garden
(Orig under McAllister)

Bowing out of the controversy was Councilman Lee H. Wigren, a CIA employee. He said he knew nothing about "the alleged incident" and his duties at the agency weren't linked to it.

The Rockefeller Commission, which investigated the CIA under a presidential directive, reported that the break-in was the only example it discovered where the police actively participated in a CIA operation.

Fairfax City Police Chief Leonard P. Kline, who wasn't in charge of the city police force at the time of the CIA break-in, disavows any ties between his department and the agency. "We never had any relationship with the CIA and we don't now," he says.

Fairfax County police issue a similar disclaimer, but Lt. Col. Kenneth R. Wilson, deputy chief of the force acknowledges the county has "an unwritten policy" of notifying government agencies when one of their employees is arrested in the county. "It would be the same for the Bureau of the